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**"MEETING
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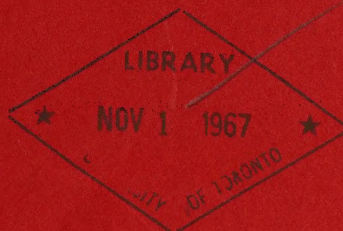


Canada

**SPECIAL
PLANNING
SECRETARIAT**

The Newest Project for Canadian Teenagers,

253 **High School Red Cross, January, 1966**



THE CANADIAN RED CROSS SOCIETY

The Canadian High School Red Cross is preparing for battle on the youth front in an important phase of the War on Poverty.

The newest project for Canada's teenagers will be an attack on some of the undesirable features of poverty in Canada, particularly the cultural wasteland that exists among so many of our young children.

The High School Red Cross has a vast potential force in every province and hopes to recruit at least 100,000 of its members to play a voluntary part in the poverty project.

The basic plan is to have the "Volunteens", Red Cross teenagers who give some of their spare time to voluntary service, act as foster brothers and sisters to less fortunate children in the primary and elementary grades of their community schools.

Ralph E. Wendeborn national director of the Canadian Junior Red Cross, is optimistic about the number of young people who will participate and assist other voluntary agencies and social workers. In what he calls Canada's largest adoption programme, the teenagers will give other youngsters a new concept of life. Most of all, it will show them that somebody cares.

"Teenagers know and understand children," he said. "They can get ideas across where even trained adults fail."

In his outline of the programme, Mr. Wendeborn stressed that it must be planned according to need. This will vary from province to province and from community to community. There will

be no standard pattern, only a general outline of some of the possibilities for voluntary service and assistance to youth in need.

Some Volunteens will serve as tutors to those who are behind in their classes, or those whose homes are too cramped, noisy and do not have an atmosphere for study. Those potential school dropouts need others to encourage them and overcome the lack of interest that is found in so many homes.

Some need to be shown that a trip through a department store, a newspaper office, a television station or an industrial plant can be an exciting venture. Others need to be introduced to other home environments for a better understanding of how the majority of our citizens live. Every act by the Volunteens towards their young charges will be a stepping stone to a brighter future that has been blighted by despair, ignorance and lack of guidance.

"Poverty of the mind can be as damaging as poverty of the body", Mr. Wendeborn added. "Studies show that neglected minds are the breeding grounds for the delinquent, the unemployable and perhaps a life of crime. We hope that this effort by our young people will pay big dividends for thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands of our citizens of the future."

Many of the Volunteens will assist in the provision of a variety of recreational activities and sports. They will give guidance on hobbies and other leisure activities. Through the interest and attention of their youthful Red Cross counsellors they will see much of the world that is normally denied such unfortunate youngsters.

